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he should go into town again on the following morning early, on certain business.

The next day all was in readiness for the Major's departure, and he was at the hall-door, buttoning on his cloak, when a servant rode up the avenue in haste, and brought a note from his son-in-law, Mr. Waring. The hurried manner of the servant, and the illegible style of the direction of the note rather alarmed the Major. After some seconds lost in searching for his spectacles, he inquired of the servant what was the matter.

"Miss Maria, sir, has been very ill all the night, and is not expected."

The Major's blood ran cold to his heart. "Is this," said he to himself, "a judgment on me for going in to ruin my good and innocent children yesterday?" Aloud he said nothing, but desiring the servant to bring in the letter to Mrs. Marley, he drove off as speedily as he could into town. His first direction was to Mr. Waring's house, where he learned that scarcely a hope remained of his only grandchild. That she had taken ill the previous evening, and had grown hourly worse, and could scarcely hold out much longer.

The Major left the house in great affliction, and returned home without calling on Mr. Maher, sending him a message that he was unable to fulfil his engagement with him that day, but would call on the following morning. For three succeeding days the Major went into town, each day intending to fulfil his engagement with Mr. Maher, and to complete his plan of disinheriting and discarding his daughters. But, as each day arrived, his first visit was to the Warings. The child was worse and worse, and his heart failed him to go further. On the fifth day, when he called, he was informed that no hope whatever remained of the child's life. The Major returned home and found everybody in the deepest affliction at the tidings of little Maria, who was the pet of the house, and had engaged the warm affections of every individual in it. Their grief but aggravated the intense feelings of the old man's own mind, and he retired to his room. The story of David's child, which was smitten for the sin of its father, haunted his imagination, and recalled to his mind the beautiful story recorded in the Bible (which the Major very often read) when Nathan said, "Because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing the child that is born to thee shall surely die. And Nathan returned to his house. The Lord also struck the child which the wife of Urias had borne to David, and his life was despaired of. And David besought the Lord for the child, and David kept a fast, and going in by himself, lay upon the ground."* In this frame, the Major felt himself convicted of sin, and thought that his crime had found him out, and judgment was awarded him for the wicked purpose of his heart to ruin his beloved children, because they had dared to worship God after the dictates of their own conscience. He earnestly prayed the Lord that the child might be spared, and his sin forgiven, and vowed upon his knees that he would no longer persecute or coerce his children, but leave them and their conversion in the hands of the Lord.

It was late in the evening, but yet the Major was not content to repair to rest without despatching a letter to his solicitor, Mr. Maher, the purport of which was, that further reflection had led him to doubt the propriety of the step he had proposed to take, and begging that Mr. Maher would destroy any draft of a will or codicil which might have been prepared pursuant to his instructions, and that nothing further should be done until he again communicated with him. A special messenger was sent into town with the epistle, and the Major felt no relief until he saw that he had fairly gone on his mission. The messenger was desired likewise to call at Mr. Warings and bring the latest intelligence respecting the child.

The return of the servant was anxiously awaited by every member of the family, but by none more impatiently than the Major, who delayed going to rest until he was informed how matters were, and after a considerable period of deep uneasiness, the messenger arrived with the first good tidings that had yet been had, and announcing that the child was slightly better and apparently rallying. After this the Major retired to sleep, taking an unusually tender leave of his family, and with a mind more free from anxiety than he enjoyed for many a day.

The morning brought better news of a more decided amendment, and every hour afterwards the child improved, until, in the course of a week, she was declared to be entirely out of danger, and soon after was playing on the Major's knees, out at Hollywood, prattling to her grandpapa as busily as ever.

From this time forth the position of Edith and Adeline underwent an entire change at home. The subject of religion was never mentioned; but all coldness and reserve on their father's part were removed, and he saluted and addressed them as warmly and affectionately as ever: a sort of tacit truce appeared to have been determined on, and each party conceded to the other, the right of acting on their own territories as they saw best; but outside their friendly circle of home Edith and Adeline had many a sneer and sarcasm to encounter, many a coldness and suspicion to feel, and many an ill-natured observation to bear. They perceived that among all their Roman Catholic friends they were regarded as aliens or deserters, and,

as if tainted with some moral leprosy, their former associates, though they observed the outward courtesies of life, yet evinced a reserve that caused them to feel they were the objects of fear and suspicion, their presence a restraint, and their conversation and conduct a rebuke to the whole tenor of the sentiment and conduct of their party.

Reader, if you are advanced in years, you may have observed, that as the spring-tide of youth and prosperity recedes, it leaves many an object on the bleak shore deserted and alone. This is painful; but the rough contact with the world blunts the edge of our feelings, and we come to regard those desertions with calmness, if not with indifference. But in the earlier years of life, when our feelings are fresh, and our knowledge of the world derived, if not from the false medium of romance and fiction, from the scarcely less delusive source of our own imaginations, the disappointment of trusted friends grown cold, and loved associates turning their heads aside, is a trial that needs more philosophy to sustain than youth usually has acquired. Our national poet has beautifully expressed the sentiment we mean to convey, when he wrote—

"Oh, colder than the wind that freezes
Founts, that but now in sunshine played,
Is the congealing pang that seizes
The trusting bosom when betrayed."

This unreserved and entire trust is only reposed in early youth, and when it meets a repulse or betrayal, it is felt with a pang of bitterness which the substantial misfortunes of after life fail to inflict.

Edith and Adeline felt this with an intensity in exact proportion to their friendship and affection. Their pride sustained them in the first instance, and their deep conviction of the vital truth at issue, and their hourly increasing terror of its being compromised in the errors of Romanism, steeled their hearts to every feeling, to every coldness and withdrawal of friendship and confidence and cordiality with which they met.

But our story has, we fear, already exceeded its due limits, and therefore we hasten to its close. At home Edith and Adeline no longer experienced any difficulty or opposition, and they soon regarded with comparative indifference the coldness of those without. Their great and paramount anxiety now was on behalf of their beloved father, who had latterly betrayed unmistakable symptoms of a speedy break up in a constitution which had endured for eighty winters. He had lived the life of a careless man—he was a perfect free-thinker in religion, though formally attached to the communion of the Roman Catholic Church. Their daily and hourly prayers were not so much that he should become a Protestant, as that he should become a Christian, and have a saving interest in the atonement of his Redeemer by a faith to lay hold on and appropriate to himself the declarations of mercy so graciously vouchsafed in the Scriptures to every one who will embrace them. The Major held up to the last, and with the characteristic vigour of his constitution and disposition never lay down until the last enemy, death, sternly seized him in his iron grasp and dragged him to his first and last bed of sickness. Still, the instinct of life, and the impulse of the natural heart of man prompted him to disbelieve that his latter end was at hand; and when Marcella, who knew too well what was approaching, suggested that the priest should be sent for, the Major rather tartly exclaimed—"What, ma'am, do you want to send me out of the world all at once?"

But, as day after day brought no relief, the Major's strength began to fail—the prospects of a near eternity began to dawn upon his mind—his heart became softened—his accents mild and gentle—and he seemed gladdened and refreshed when Edith and Adeline, improving every moment of opportunity, told him of the stupendous plan of salvation developed in the Gospel invitations of free and sovereign grace, and of the gracious invitations of mercy to the most ungodly and abandoned of sinners, and of the preciousness and priceless merits of the sacrifice of the Son of God. He listened with greedy avidity to glad tidings, which for upwards of eighty years had never reached his ears, though the sum and substance of the Gospel. He never expressed himself wearied of listening, and always welcomed their approach to his bedside, and wished their assistance in every little office of alleviation and consolation which his painful disease demanded.

Meanwhile we must not forget or disregard the feelings of Marcella, who was also devotedly attached to her father, and deeply affected by his severe illness. But, she had another sorrow far more bitter than the loss of her dearest parent; and it was this, that, although yielding to her importunities, he had about a fortnight before his death, consented to see the priest and undergo the ceremony of Extreme Unction, yet ever after, and as he grew worse, he steadily and determinedly refused to see him any more, or to admit him into his presence. Every effort of hers (and they were most assiduous and unremitting) to extract a consent had failed, although she applied herself every hour, and every moment she could spare, from the sick room, in prayer that her beloved father might not depart hence at variance with the Catholic Church. She constantly read, by his bedside, the prayers of her Church; but though he never repelled her affectionate attention he evidently regarded them not. His mind seemed absorbed in other matters, and poor Marcella could not but perceive with unutterable alarm and regret that the intercourse of Edith and Adeline was more acceptable to the Major than her own.

This went on for several days, and the Major's disease (which was an organic one) gained head every day, and all hope of his recovery had ceased, so that his death was hourly expected. His mind was still as clear and vigorous as ever, and fully conscious of his near approach to the dark valley of the shadow of death. His weakness had so far increased as to render him scarcely equal to the exertion of speaking. But on Friday evening he seemed to take a turn for the better (the sure presage of immediate dissolution), and gathering all his energies he felt sensible that this impartation of strength was the last effort and rally of expiring nature, and that the closing scene was at hand. His mind was at rest in the bosom of Jesus, and his bold heart nothing daunted by the king of terrors, he desired every member of his family to be summoned to his bedside.

A solemn and mournful scene is such an assembling, when the head of a family summons its members to bid adieu ere he sets out upon that long journey from whence no traveller returns.

When all were seated round him, the Major said in a strong and steady voice, "I have called you all together, feeling certain that my time is come, God's will be done! and I am satisfied to resign my spirit into the hands of my Creator and Redeemer. But, before I go, I wish to make such reparation as I can to you all. I feel I have been a tyrant, and did not indeed know what a blessing I enjoyed in the family I had, and I abused my authority over you all. I would only ask you now to forgive me, and you my dearest Edith and Adeline, to whom I have acted so harshly, I can make you no other amends now, but to give you my blessing, I pray God to watch over you, and I give you my free and full consent to follow your religion according to your conscience, and may God bless you all, here and hereafter."

These words were followed by a scene it would be impossible, and if it were possible, be painful to describe. The effort to the Major had perhaps exceeded his strength, and he fell into a faint. Marcella conceiving he was dying, and dying, as his last words seemed to convey, an apostate from the Catholic Church, was in terror and grief. She fell upon her knees, by his bedside, and prayed loudly in the cold formularies of her Church in the offices for the sick. The Major soon recovering, moved his hand with impatience and said faintly, "No, no, Adeline will read for me, Adeline." Marcella overwhelmed with dismay, ran wildly to her room and fell down in an agony of prayer that her father might not be taken in such a frame of mind, and the words of prayer never ceased from her lips until his last breath had departed.

Adeline offered no prayer, and resorted to no formulae, but whispered into the dying Major's ear, the consolatory text, "*There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*,"* "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the redemption of sins according to the riches of his grace," and while yet repeating this last text, her hand in his, the Major gave a strong responsive pressure and all was over.

TALK OF THE ROAD.—No. XVI.

"WELL, Pat, what have you got to talk of this time?" said Jen.

"The station, Jen," said Pat.

"And is it at a station you were, Pat?" said Jen.

"Deed is it, Jen," said Pat, "without meaning a bit of it."

"And how did you get there at all without meaning it, Pat?" said Jen.

"Why, I was going by Pat Devine's public-house," said Pat, "and there was a deal of people about it, but I didn't know what was going on, and I just went in for a pen'orth of baccy, and there I was in it, afore I knew where it was; and then, sure enough, I seen it was Father John holding a station in the inner room; and when I got the baccy, I was making my lucky, when I heard Molly Devine, and Mary Gormly, and Sal Gougerty, and some more of the devotest women, that's always at their duties, bragging again each other what was the best thing in the Church of Rome to trust in for our salvation, and then I just stopped a bit, to hear what they would say."

"Well, I suppose they were all of the one mind any way," said Jen.

"Not a bit of it, Jen," said Pat; "there was no two of them of the one way of thinking; just one thing better than another, taking their pick and choice like; and, deed, there seemed to be a something for every one, no matter how many."

"Well, the more hope some one hit right," said Jen.

"I'm afeard not, Jen," said Pat, "for there was one thing nobody took hold to."

"And what did they take hold on, Pat?" said Jen.

"Why, Molly Devine allowed it was the Mass, 'for sure,' says she, 'that's best of all; isn't it offering the body and blood, and soul and divinity, for the living and the dead?' says she. And then Mary Gormly allowed it was the holy water; 'for sure when I have plenty of that by me,' says she, 'I don't care for charms, nor fairies, nor the devil himself,' says she; 'and what need I want anything else,' says she, 'when I don't care for the devil itself, with the holy water on me?' And then Sal Gougerty allowed it was the scapular, 'for sure that'll get me to

* 2 Kings, xii. 14-16.

* Rom. viii. 1. (Douay Bible.)

heaven the next Saturday after I die," says she, "and what need I want of anything else?" says she. And old Peggy Donohue says, "sure it's confession," says she, "for when the priest says the Latin over me won't I be as clean of sin as the child unborn," says she, "and what more do I want than that," says she, "and what are yees all here for with your shillings, if that's not the thing?" says she. And then old Nancy Smith just riz on them all, "and sure," says she, "it's anancy yees are entirely; sure isn't one drop of the holy oil worth them all?" says she, "if I get one drop of that on me before the breath is out of me, what need I care for anything else?" says she. And now do you see, Jem, what none of them thought of to trust in?"

"Aye do I," said Jem. "Sure none of them knows that it's in their own Bible that the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin. And isn't it the poor thing that none of them thinks of trusting in that, the creatures? and isn't it the quare thing, if the re all Catholics, that they don't all trust in the same thing, but one taking one thing and another another thing? but sure that's the way with them. But, Pat, now did you tell them of the blood of Christ, and you at a station?"

"Well, deed then I did, Jem," says Pat. "Says I, girls, isn't the blood of Christ the best thing at all, for sure that cleanses from all sin?"

"And how did they take that at all, Pat?" said Jem.

"Well, Jem," said Pat, "they just darned their eyes in me, as if they never heard the like of that before; but I hadn't time to hear more of it, for Pat Daly was just coming out of the room where Father John was hearing confessions, and he just got hearing what I said, so he turned round on me, and, 'Is it a Souper you are, to bring the like of that to a station with you?' says he. 'Not a bit of it,' says I; 'I takes no soup, thank God,' says I. And that's true, anyway, for not a drop of soup crossed my carcase since the Relief Committee gave it out in the famine. And I just turned round again on him, and, says I—'Are you going to tell us that the Soupers will have the blood of Christ all to themselves, and the Catholics get none of it?' says I; and with that he just quit it. Well, who do you think I seen go in next, Jem?"

"I don't know, Pat," said Jem.

"Well, if it wasn't Tim Tevlin," said Pat.

"Is it him," said Jem, "the poacher and sheep stealer, that never did an honest day's work in his life, and a Rib-bon-man into the bargain? What does the likes of him want of absolution?"

"Well, now," said Pat, "if Father John can wipe out a man's sins with a turn of his hand, isn't that just the man for him to try on?"

"Well, sure enough," said Jem; "but did he get absolution?"

"Well, I'll tell you about that," said Pat, "for the door stood open a minute, and I just seen it. There was the wee table, you know, with the plate on to drop the shilling in, just forenint the door, and Tim was giving it the go by. 'Where's the shilling?' says Father John. 'Hav'n't got it, your reverence,' says Tim. 'Go off with you and get it,' says Father John. 'And where will I get it, your reverence?' says Tim. 'What's that to me?' says Father John: 'off with you and get it.' And so Tim stood there quite easy. 'What are you waiting for there?' says Father John. 'Won't your reverence give me absolution?' says Tim. 'You'll get none without the shilling; be off out of that for it,' says Father John. So Tim stood there as easy as you please. 'What are you standing there for?' says Father John. 'Will I steal it, your reverence?' says Tim. 'Be off for the shilling, and don't bother me,' says Father John, with a screech. Well, Tim see'n Father John was minding nothing, he was that mad, and Tim had got just forenint the table, and as he was turning round, he just drops his hand in the plate, and lifts the shilling, and walks out, and away out of the house. And, a while after, in comes Tim; and, when the next man comes out, in goes Tim. 'And have you the shilling, now?' says Father John. 'Yes, your reverence,' says Tim, dropping the shilling in the plate; 'but sure I had to steal it, your reverence,' says he. Well, you never seen a man so deaf as Father John. He never heard a word, but just says—'Down on your knees,' says he. And then the door shut to, and I seen no more till Tim comes out, looking as pleased as if he had stole the best sheep in a flock."

"Well, now, I wonder," said Jem, "would the absolution do for stealing the shilling?"

"And why wouldn't it?" said Pat, "didn't he confess it, and get absolution?"

"Well, maybe it was as good for that as for all the rest," said Jem, "but did you go in yourself, Pat?"

"No, indeed, then, I didn't," said Pat, "but I was mighty feard Father John would have caught me, and lugged me in, maybe; for, a while after, out comes Father John in a hurry, and, 'Boys,' says he, 'is that Pat Doyle going down the street?' 'It is, your reverence,' says several. 'Out with you, boys, and fetch him in to me,' says Father John. So off the boys went. Well, you know, Jem, Pat Doyle is taken up with the readers, and has quit the Mass altogether, and goes to Church; so, in he comes with the boys; and deed it's the dark corner I got into then; and then Father John says to Pat Doyle, 'Are you come to confession?' says he. 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle, 'I confessed my sins to God this

morning.' 'Much good that'll do you,' says Father John; 'what were you promised for turning?' says he. So Pat Doyle didn't say a word. 'Was it money?' says Father John; 'was it five pounds?' 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. 'Was it meal?' says Father John. 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. 'Was it soup?' says Father John. 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. 'And what was it you were promised?' says Father John; 'tell it out, man, before the people,' says he. 'Salvation, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. Well, Father John looked done for a minute, anyway; and then, says he, 'Are you coming back to Mass?' says he. 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. 'And what will you and your children live on if you don't, when you were promised nothing?' says Father John. 'Please your reverence,' says Pat Doyle, 'we'll live on the blossoms of the bushes afore we go back.' Well, if I wasn't thinking what would come on Pat Doyle, or myself too, if I was caught, when who should come in but the Rev. Mr. Owens himself; for he was coming up the street, and he seen Pat Doyle fetched in to the station, and just followed him in, and he just comes right up to Father John, and says to him, 'Sir, it was I that took this man, Pat Doyle, away from your Mass, for I showed him that the sacrifice of Christ was finished on the cross, never more to be repeated; and that no Christian man should bow down in worship to a wafer. And I am ready now, sir, to show you, before the people, why no Christian man should do so, if you will undertake to show them why they should.' 'Pat Devine, where's Pat Devine?' says Father John. 'Here, sir,' says Pat. 'Is it getting my horse you are? Will he never be ready?' says Father John. 'Yes, sir, coming, sir,' says Pat Devine, and out he comes with the horse in a hurry. 'Oh, your reverence,' says Peggy Donoghue; 'sure you won't go without hearing my confession.' 'Oh! your reverence,' says Sal Gougerty, and all of them, 'won't you stop a bit for us?' 'Out of the way, women,' says Father John; 'is it all day I'll be kept here?' And up he gets on his horse, with Pat Devine holding the bridle and the stirrup, and flattering him all he could, and I peeping out of the open window: and I seen, as he rode off, that Pat Devine just turned the wrong side of his hand after him; and says he, 'The back of my hand to you, that wouldn't stand up for your Church and your religion.'"

"Well, Pat," said Jem, "sure Paddy Doyle puts us all to shame, that wasn't afeard to stand up like a man."

"Well, maybe so," said Pat; "but sure why can't a man keep it all to himself, when it sets the country against him? Sure I trust in nothing but Christ and His blood, that cleanseth from all sin: but why would I go to say that out, and bring trouble on myself?"

Who knows but the time is coming, when Pat himself will say it before men? Pat does not know it, nor mean it now. But the time comes to every one that truly trusts in Christ, when something in their breasts within will make them confess Christ before men; for otherwise Christ would have to deny them before His Father in heaven.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We request our correspondent B. H. to give us his address, as, before inserting his communication, we wish for some further information respecting it.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st. No anonymous letter can be attended to. Whatever is sent for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee for his good faith.

We would request our valued correspondents, both Roman Catholics and Protestants, to limit the length of their communications, and not to discuss a variety of distinct topics in one letter.

Contributors of £1 per annum will be furnished with six copies, any of which will be forwarded, as directed, to nominees of the subscriber. Any one receiving any number of the journal which has not been paid for or ordered by himself, will not be charged for it, and may assume that it has been paid for by a subscriber.

If any of our friends could favour us with a copy or copies of the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, Nos. 2, 8, or 11, to complete sets, we should be greatly obliged.

The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, SEPTEMBER, 1853.

THERE are but two ways of ruling the world. The one, that of reducing men to passive obedience, by practising on their fears of evil, and making them slaves; the other, by winning the affections and satisfying the convictions of rational free agents, and thus securing their voluntary obedience to well-ordered rule. These systems may be briefly called slavery and freedom. The

one seeks to keep men narrow-minded, grovelling, ignorant, and superstitious; the other, to make them intellectual, spiritual, wise, and happy.

To which system does true Christianity belong? If to the former, she would do wisely, no doubt, to shut up the portals of knowledge, and to limit the field of vision, lest men, having once enjoyed a glimpse of the glorious canopy of heaven, should struggle to emancipate themselves from that tyranny which would doom them to grope in darkness and ignorance for ever, rather than peril its own selfish sway over their minds and liberties.

If, however, Christianity be a system whose power consists in its suitableness to enlighten, to elevate, to purify our race, and exacts nothing more than the voluntary obedience of reasoning free agents, the defensive armour of a shrinking or timid policy does not suit her. Let the priests of another faith ply their prudential expedients to keep the world from enlarging its knowledge, lest to the same extent they should diminish their own power. True Christianity stands in a higher and firmer attitude. She has, thanks be to God, come down to us with all the majesty of truth, and with all the grandeur of age, unscathed by the pigmy philosophy which would, by undermining man's faith in an unseen world, reduce him to the level of the beasts that perish. The solemn march of eighteen centuries has but demonstrated more clearly that religious truth is seated on a rocky pinnacle, whose summit may, indeed, have sometimes been obscured by the clouds of error or doubt, but which has survived, and will still survive the storms of time, and remain unaltered through eternity. With such a religion as this there is nothing to hide. A half-learned and superficial public may associate with the very notion of a priesthood, the blindness and bigotry of a sinking cause, but they must be taught that Christianity is not a bigotted or a sinking cause, and that those who are able to estimate its grand simplicity, are fearless of the most thorough sifting of its pretensions, and neither require mankind slavishly to take it for granted, nor are disposed to shun a single question that can be started on the subject of Christian evidences. Again, we say, with such a religion as this there is nothing to hide. All should be above board. The broadest light of day should be made fully and freely to circulate throughout all her mysteries. Secrets she has none. Her office has been to reveal mysteries—to bring life and immortality to light—to make known what was before kept secret from the foundation of the world. With the frankness and simplicity of conscious greatness, she invites free inquiry, and challenges scrutiny; and whether she has to contend with the pride of philosophy, falsely so called, or to oppose herself to the prejudices of the unenlightened multitude, she is not afraid to do so on her own strength, and spurns the props and auxiliaries of superstition, of which the votaries of a weaker or doubtful faith are so anxious to take advantage. Essentially a religion of light, she is ever ready to come to the light, that her deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

We have been led into these considerations by reflecting on what appears to us to have been the cause and the probable consequences of the late modification of the system of National Education in this country, to which we have made allusion in another part of our paper—we mean the exclusion of the work on the *Evidences of Christianity*, which (after a twenty years' approbation) has at length been effected by the influence of those who would rather trust to the system of implicit faith in authority, aided by the props and aids of superstition, than attempt, by teaching mankind to think and reason rightly, to place their faith on the more solid basis of reason and knowledge. We have, perhaps, been

* See St. Matthew's Gospel, x. 33; and St. Mark, viii. 38.